

**John Murray**

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**From:** Regina Tischler  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 08, 2004 3:44 PM  
**To:** John Murray  
**Subject:** WACL 13% book budget

John,

If the books and periodicals line for the Citizens' Library is reduced to \$4000 that would come close to 13% of the total municipal operating budget. (Actually, it's a round-up from \$3895, if that's permissible.) Then Acton Memorial and Citizens' would be consistent in applying the same percentage. Will this be OK ?

Regina

Following is Marcia's explanation of this "Request for Flexibility:"

During the recent budget crunch, the Board of Library Commissioners modified some of the standards. In 2000, they introduced a 'Request for Flexibility,' which I only became aware of in December. This allows libraries open the number of hours of a higher population range to allocate the percentage of their budget to library materials as if they were in the higher population range.

As Acton is in the 15-25K population range, the minimum hours of opening is 50 per week (winter schedule) and the minimum percentage for materials is 15%. However, since Memorial is open 63 hours a week even with the FY04 cut and 63 hours is the minimum for the next 25-50K size range, Acton may use the 13% figure for materials that libraries in the 25K-50K population range use.

The reason Memorial went to the lower percentage is that we had to cut \$25K from the FY05 budget. Cutting staff again would have reduced the hours of opening and been horrible for morale; the other expenses in our budget are materials, MLN membership (which is a set, assessed fee) and a few minor things like office supplies, travel to meetings, etc.—the only place we were able to get any substantial money from was the materials budget. By lowering it to 13% and including an allowed portion of our MLN fee as part of the materials budget (because MLN also supplies some databases), we were able to generate \$18,000 of the \$25,000 cut from the materials budget. The rest came out of personnel (\$4250 out of \$632,400, which means we'll fill in less when people are on vacation) and a little here and there.